

PROJECT NAME: Bear Lake Quagga Mussel Prevention Program

RECIPIENT: Bear Lake Regional Commission

LOCATION: Bear Lake, UT

PURPOSE: The Bear Lake Regional Commission was formed in 1973 through a joint powers agreement with the Governors of Idaho and Utah to protect Bear Lake. Support of the regional commission is driven by the local elected officials who compose the governing board. Many important projects have been implemented by the regional commission over the years to manage growth and protect Bear Lake.. Recently, a new threat to the fragile aquatic ecosystem of Bear Lake has surfaced.

Quagga Mussels were introduced to the United States by cargo ships from Europe and have contaminated many waters in the Great Lakes Region and most recently waterbodies in the west. Bear Lake has been identified by the State of Idaho as the top threat for infestation based on watercraft users travel patterns. Often watercraft users that frequent Bear Lake spend time at recreation sites that have known Quagga Mussel populations.

Quagga Mussels are small bi-valves approximately the size of a mans thumbnail. The reproduce prolifically and attach themselves to nearly any type of substrate. As filter feeders they remove important nutrients from the water column that would otherwise be available to other desirable species. To fish, they hold no nutritional value. When they wash ashore and die, they release “pseudofeces” producing a vile stench. The ecological and economic damage done by these mussels is often in the billions of dollars and once infected, they are virtually impossible to eradicate.

The purpose of this project would be twofold: provide trained employees to inspect watercraft and direct contaminated craft to decontamination units and provide extensive public outreach to educate watercraft users on the importance of protecting Bear Lake from this menace.

Budget

Six full time entry level employees-\$240,000

Ten seasonal employees-\$120,000

Benefits

Benefits for six full time employees-\$120000

Travel-\$60,000 travel included mileage for employees travelling to established stations around the lake, training seminars at Lake Mead, and trips to local capitals, and Washington D.C. for coordination purposes and report on the findings of the project.

Equipment-\$495,000 for a permanent decontamination unit, two portable units, and two vehicles with four wheel drive to haul the portable units.

Supplies-\$20,000 includes printed materials to circulate and items to be passed out to the public as reminders of the quagga mussel program and the importance of documenting watercraft history and cleaning.

Indirect-\$200,000 to cover office expenses associated with running the program

AMOUNT: \$1,255,000